

A. Project Objectives

This package is put forth to result in a facility that supports the Air Force mission, and provides and promotes the specific Youth/School Age Center as well as activities for school age children as described in *Caring for Our Children*. The facility enhances the learning and everyday activities for the youth in the community. The Youth Center provides a wide range of programs based on the interests of the youth community. The School Age Program provides a unique growing and learning experience. The design of the building should assist in the School Age Program objective in creating activities that complement, rather than duplicate the school day.

B. Size of the Facility

The School Age Center has a specific requirement of 35 ft² per child with a 12 to 1 ratio of children to instructor with a maximum of 48 students in self-contained rooms. The Multi-Purpose Space size is dictated by the minimum requirement for a regulation basketball court.

C. Program of Spaces

The selection of both interior and exterior spaces for the facility shall satisfy the needs and policies of the base and comply with the overall size and budget limitations for the project. The following factors shall be considered:

1. User Needs and Preferences

The type, number and size of spaces appropriate for users and operators will vary depending on the climate, location and demography of the base.

- a. School Age - these spaces require some separation from other areas while still allowing access to "Shared Spaces."
- b. Youth Center - the Youth Center is to exhibit a "homey" feel with comfortable furniture, and electronic equipment. Spaces should be more open and unrestrictive. There should be an area where teens and pre-teens may have quiet or study time.

2. Operating Policies

A predetermined plan of operation, based upon realistic assumptions about participation levels, and scheduling, shall guide the choice of spaces. Such a plan shall identify any and all opportunities that exist for time and space sharing.

3. Gross and Net Area

The School Age Program is a form of child care - space requirements should be based on historical data. The square footage needed to house mechanical equipment, since it varies so much according to climate, is not included in these numbers. Net floor area shall therefore be calculated as total assignable square feet other than that devoted to walls, structure, corridors, mechanical, electrical, communications and toilets. The lobby space, though fulfilling circulation function, fulfills other needs and hence shall be tallied as net usable area. The tables indicate the minimum area needed for each of the component spaces. They also show how the size of the overall facility affects the size of each component space.

D. Architectural Character

A Youth/School Age Center shall have a distinctive external form that expresses the vital base-wide role it plays in the community. It shall create a sense of place, announce its presence and invite use. Although there is no single mandatory style, the building shall respect its context within the base. If clustered with other facilities in a community center, it shall adopt a scale and character in harmony with its neighbors. Climate, site conditions, cultural heritage or regional architecture may also appropriately influence its appearance.

E. External Circulation

There should be no more than two public entrances, each opening directly onto the central lobby, shall be provided (see Design Objective, **B. Surveillance**). A single entrance serving both the parking area and street shall be provided where site conditions permit. A secure drop off and pick-up area shall be provided at the main entrance to the facility. Crossings shall be provided to allow ease of access without endangering the younger youths.

F. Internal Circulation

A compact circulation scheme meets two basic needs. It maximizes net useable square feet and minimizes staff legwork. A lobby “hub” with direct access to all spaces is therefore required. Deadend corridors longer than 25'-0" shall be avoided. The activity spaces, multi-purpose, and public toilets shall all open onto this central space. At least one uninterrupted wall surface shall be provided in this area for display purposes, as the exhibition of “student work” is seen as a vital part of the Youth/School Age Center. This surface shall incorporate display cases and display lighting.

G. Zoning

1. Access and Security

The ongoing activities in a Youth/School Age Center can be clustered into three groups: The School Age Program, The Youth Program, and Multi-Purpose Space Activities. Depending on the size of the building, spaces containing the School Age Program must be separated from the rest of the facility. The younger youths in this program are supervised by their own staff and must be served in a securable space. Unlike the School Age area the Youth Group has more freedom in the facility. They need access to the Multi-Purpose Room, Snack Area and Computer Room. Multiple groups through out the year that are not affiliated with the Youth and School Age programs use the Multi-Purpose space. The areas around the multi-purpose space must be securable, have access to public toilets, as well as have high visibility from the central lobby.

2. Environmental Control

A Youth/School Age Center houses a number of activities. Activities in the Multi-Purpose space can cause a great deal of noise. Noise transmission from this space must not disrupt surrounding spaces. The Multi-Purpose space must be acoustically isolated from the surrounding spaces. The School Age facility is another location in which sound transmission can be problematic. Special consideration should be taken in these spaces. It is also important that as much natural light filter into as many interior spaces as possible (See Chapter 3, **D. Illumination**).

H Flexibility

As programs, directors and user preferences change, so will the “menu” of courses offered at a Youth/School Age Center. Flexibility, whether on a daily or yearly basis, prolongs the usefulness of the facility and the spaces within. Rooms designed and equipped specifically for a given activity thwart the need for time and space sharing. Multi-purpose spaces that lend themselves to rapid turnover among various activities and class sizes support that need. Such spaces have a general work area divisible by folding partitions and surrounded by storage alcoves amply sized for stowing supplies. This need is especially great in the Multi-Purpose Areas.